

Washington, DC -- During a House Rules Committee hearing yesterday evening, U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) outlined his support for a bi-partisan resolution praising our troops and opposing sending any additional combat troops to Iraq. The resolution, H.Con.Res.63, will be debated on the House floor all this week, providing each member of Congress the opportunity to speak for five minutes.

“It has become overwhelmingly clear that the current strategy to secure the peace in Iraq is failing,” said Arcuri, who earlier in the day visited wounded soldiers recovering at the Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital in Washington. “And yet, the Administration contends that sending more combat troops into Iraq is the silver bullet solution to quell the ongoing violence; even though as we debate this resolution the casualty toll continues to rise. I could not disagree more with that strategy.”

Below are formal remarks made by Arcuri during yesterday’s Rules Committee hearing on H.Con.Res. 63:

**U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24)**  
**House Committee on Rules**  
**Opening Statement – H.Con.Res. 63**  
**February 12, 2007**

“My constituents – like the majority of Americans – are outraged with the present course in Iraq. Here we are three years later with over 3,100 of our brave men and women killed fighting a war that has cost our nation over \$370 billion dollars.

“It has become overwhelmingly clear that the current strategy to secure the peace in Iraq is failing. And yet, the Administration contends that sending more combat troops into Iraq is the silver bullet solution to quell the ongoing violence; even though as we debate this resolution the casualty toll continues to rise. I could not disagree more with that strategy.

“This resolution establishes two clearly defined principles that are supported by a large majority of Americans, and I am confident will garner the support of many of my colleagues from the

other side of the aisle.

“First, we support our troops and second, we oppose sending additional troops into Iraq.

“Just this afternoon, I visited with some of our wounded soldiers at the Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital. While I was there, I had the opportunity to talk with the parents of a wounded soldier from my district. During our conversation, I mentioned some statements made during the television talk shows yesterday morning. One of our colleagues from the other side of aisle posed two questions to our Majority Leader: 1) Why aren’t you allowing us an opportunity to offer our proposal on Iraq; and 2) What is your answer on how we win?

“In response to the first question – you had the better part of three years to use your position in the Majority to change the course in Iraq, and you did nothing. No resolutions, few if any hearings and no accountability; meanwhile the casualty rate continued to escalate.

“By the results of the last election it is clear the American people have had enough, they demanded new hope and a new direction. Now it is our turn lead.

“In response to the second question – how do we win? We win by stopping the casualties and by bringing as many of our troops home alive as soon as possible. The devastating injuries I saw first hand earlier today further solidified my opposition to sending additional troops into battle.

“Nearly 60,000 Americans were killed in Vietnam. The question I would like to pose to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is: How many American lives are worth risking to continue this ill-conceived and poorly-planned strategy?

“What we are proposing is a resolution that unites Americans and takes a vital first step toward bringing our brave men and women home – not a political resolution intended to further divide Americans.”

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